



## VOTE YES ON LD 2141: PROVIDE ESSENTIAL FUNDING TO PROTECT MAINE’S LAKES AND FARMLAND

**LD 2141:** An Act to Direct a Portion of Unclaimed Beverage Container Deposits to the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund and the Maine Working Farmland Access and Protection Program.

***\$2 million for lake protection AND \$2 million for farm protection***

This bill will **protect lakes and farms** while maintaining a robust recycling program – a model that **already works well in other states.**

- Unredeemed bottle deposits are **public funds** that belong to the people of Maine and should be invested in the highest and best use to benefit the people of Maine
- **There is a precedent in other states.** VT, MA, MI, and NY all use unredeemed deposit funds to support *both* environmental programs and recycling costs.
- Even after investing some funds to protect lakes and farms, **a substantial portion will remain to offset the costs of the redemption program.**
- **This bill is wildly popular**, with 100+ citizen testimonies and 1400+ signatures. The only opposing testimony is from the beverage industry.



**Maine’s lakes are turning green, and there is no annual funding to protect them.**



**We need to invest now before it’s too late.**



## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Does LD 2141 need to go before the Appropriations Committee?**

No. There is no fiscal note associated with LD 2141. Unclaimed deposits from liquor and spirits are not included in this bill. Those unclaimed deposits will continue to support highway funding.

### **Will LD 2141 “break” the bottle bill?**

No. Other states (including VT, MI, and NY) allocate some or all of their unclaimed/unredeemed deposits to environmental programs or their general funds. All of these states maintain high recycling rates while also running efficient bottle return programs. Today, bottlers actually benefit from lower redemption rates. Changing the system so benefits are not tied to redemption rates actually strengthens the bottle bill.

### **Does Maine need money for lake protection?**

Yes. There is no sustained funding source for the growing scope of critical lake protection work. The DEP has identified a broad range of priorities that could be funded, including lake research and monitoring, matching grants for installing erosion controls, building local capacity for technical assistance, lake education, alum treatments, and more.

### **Do bottlers pay for recycling?**

Yes. Bottlers pay for the more than 800 million beverage containers they sell each year, a significant waste stream. The beverage industry does not share the revenue they earn from selling these beverages or from the sale of recycled commodities. Maine has nine other programs that require producers of waste to pay for management and recycling.

### **Will LD 2141 take away all the unredeemed deposit funds?**

No. LD 2141 takes an estimated one-quarter to one-third of the total revenue leftover when bottles are unclaimed/unredeemed. This leaves an estimated \$6-12 million of unclaimed deposits to help offset the cost of recycling.

### **Do unclaimed bottle deposits belong to bottlers?**

No. When the bottle bill began in 1978 to reduce litter and increase recycling, none of these funds went to bottlers. It was only in 2003 that this changed, as an incentive for bottlers to join a recycling cooperative. Now that recycling co-ops are mandatory, that incentive is no longer needed. These funds were paid by Maine consumers – the public – and should be used to invest in programs that help Maine thrive, not as revenue to beverage companies.

### **Don't bottlers need clean water?**

Yes. The bottling industry uses Maine's clean water to generate quality products. This resource is at risk and needs proactive protection. If we don't do more to protect our lakes today, the quality water sources that the bottlers need for their products are at risk of disappearing.